



Books For Young Readers

2024

The Deborah Harris Agency

Young Adult

Young Adult

The Forbidden Book by Sacha Lamb

Dybbuks. Illegal printing.
A genderqueer lesbian with a knife.

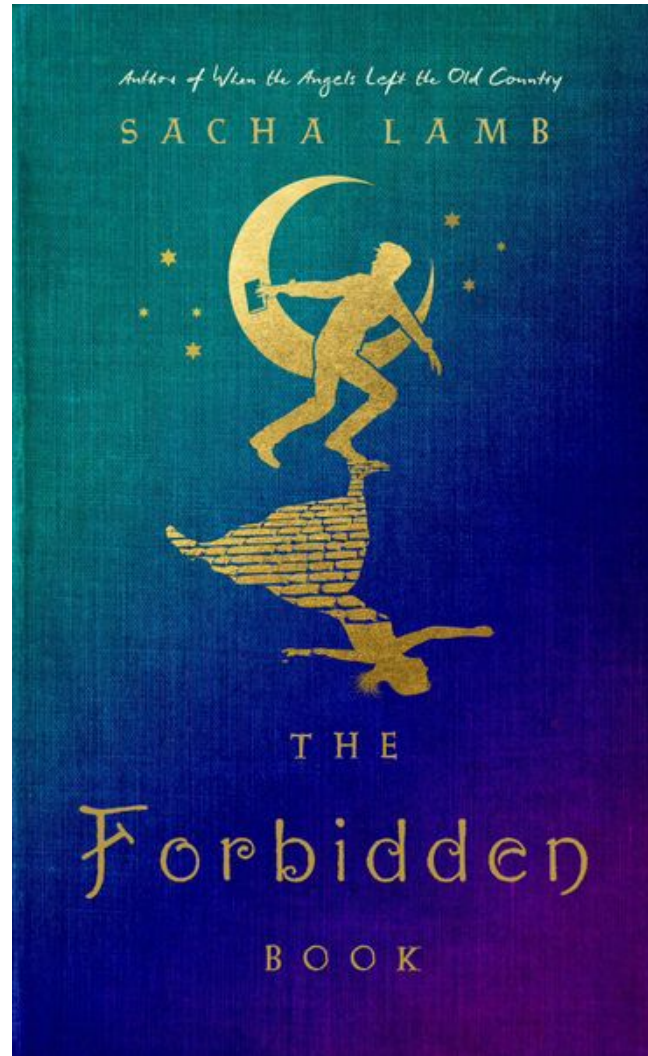
Set against a backdrop of literary censorship and growing Jewish political consciousness, Sydney Taylor and Stonewall award-winning Sacha Lamb's sophomore novel is a soaring exploration of identity, survival, and ultimately, hope.

On the night before her wedding, 17-year-old Sorel leaps from a window and runs away from her life. To keep from being discovered, she takes on the male identity of Isser Jacobs — but it soon becomes clear that there is a real Isser Jacobs, and people want him dead.

Her mistaken identity takes Sorel into the dark underworld of her small city in the Pale of Settlement, where smugglers, forgers, and wicked angels fight for control of the Jewish community. In order to make it out, Sorel must discover who Isser Jacobs really is — and who she wants to be.



Sacha Lamb is a 2018 Lambda Literary Fellow in young adult fiction, and graduated in Library and Information Science and History from Simmons University. Sacha lives in New England with a miniature dachshund mix named Anzu Bean. Their debut novel, *When The Angels Left The Old Country*, was named a Printz Honor Book, a Sydney Taylor Award winner and a Stonewall Book Award winner.



Author of the Printz Honor, Stonewall, and Sydney Taylor Award winning book, *When the Angels Left the Old Country*

Levine Querido (World English), October 1, 2024

Young Adult

The Judgment of Yoyo Gold by Isaac Blum

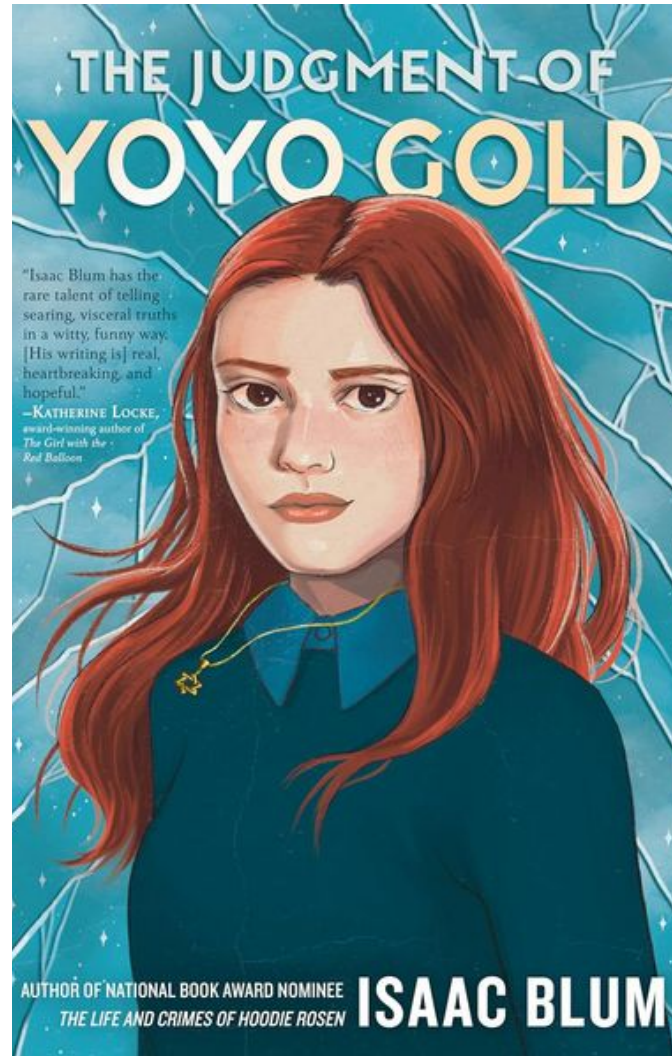
A smart and powerful story set in the Orthodox Jewish community about what it means to fit in, break out, and find your own way, by the award-winning author of *The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen*.

Yoyo Gold has always played the role of the perfect Jewish daughter. She keeps kosher, looks after her siblings, and volunteers at the local food bank. She respects the decisions of her rabbi father and encourages her friends to observe the rules of their Orthodox faith. But when she sees her best friend cast out of the community over a seemingly innocent transgression, Yoyo's eyes are opened to the truth of her neighbors' hypocrisies. And what she sees leaves her shocked and unmoored.

As Yoyo's frustration builds, so does the pressure to speak out, even if she can only do so anonymously on TikTok. But when one of her videos goes viral—and her decisions wind up impacting not only her own life but also her relationship with the boy she's falling for—Yoyo's world is thrown into chaos. She's forced to choose which path to take, for her community, for her family, and most importantly, for herself. Isaac Blum returns with a new novel that asks what it really means to be part of a community—and what it means to break free.



Isaac Blum (he/him) is the National Book Award-longlisted and Morris Award-winning author of *The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen* (Philomel, 2022). He's taught English at several colleges and universities, and at Orthodox Jewish and public schools. He lives with his wife in Philadelphia, where he watches sports and reads books that make him laugh while showing him something true about the world.



Option Publishers:

Germany: Belz & Gelber

Netherlands: Kokboekencentrum

Russia: Alpina

Penguin/Philomel (NA), October 15, 2024

They Watch From Below by Katya de Becerra

Sabine Velde, a teen podcaster on the hunt for a big idea, finds inspiration in her mother's old lecture notes from the Concepts of Modern Natural Science, a freshman subject from decades ago. Hidden between the notes is a handwritten message: "If I disappear, know that they took me." Sabine suspects the message is from Dr. Julia Rogoff, the enigmatic professor who taught the subject—she disappeared twenty years ago.

The message launches Sabine straight into the heart of an old campus mystery which, to this day, keeps students and faculty wary of the shadowy "Pale Men," believed to be the omens of death. As Sabine untangles the clues surrounding Julia's long-ago disappearance, she believes the Pale Men are the ones being referenced in the message. But they do not want to be found. Sabine's investigation lands her in the crosshairs of the vicious occult society that might be responsible for Julia's fate, while her mother's entanglement with the society twists everything Sabine thought she knew about herself, pushing her toward the point of no return.

Will she resist the magicians or lose herself to their dark thrall?



Katya de Becerra is the author of *What The Woods Keep* (Imprint, 2018), *Oasis* (Imprint, 2020), and *When Ghosts Call Us Home* (Page Street, 2023). Born in Russia, Katya now lives in Melbourne with her husband. After earning a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Melbourne, Katya has spent the last ten years as a lecturer and a scholar researching technologies & inequalities in education.



Option Publishers:

Russia: Eksmo

UK: Macmillan

The Devourer
by Alison Ames

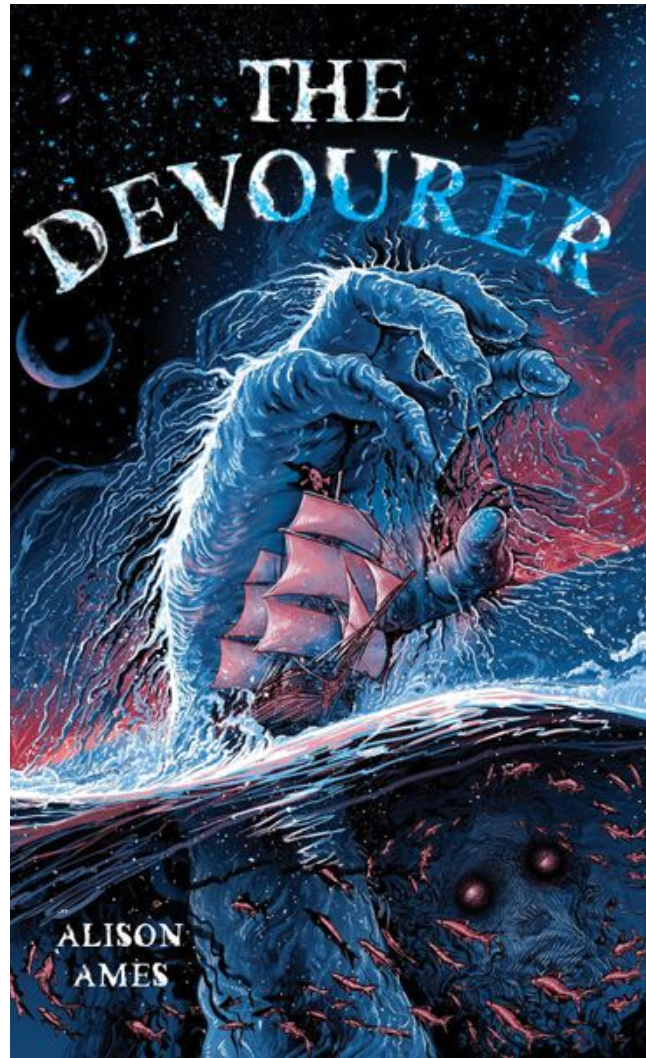
When Adra Dantes' half-brother Cameron attacks their father and robs him of a priceless treasure map, he leaves him a shell of the pirate captain he once was. Now Adra's only aim in life is to kill Cameron, retrieve her father's map, and claim the treasure herself.

But her plans are thwarted. A sudden surplus of magic in the world is causing ancient sea monsters to awaken. Worse yet, Adra discovers that the ship she's been chasing for almost a year now is captained by a girl who's been impersonating Cameron, while Cameron himself is missing.

The two pirate captains will have to work together if they are to find Cameron, but before they can do so, they must vanquish the beast—known as The Devourer—that is sinking ships and causing so much fear. Adra will have to descend leagues beneath the sea to the creature's lair to strike a deal with her, but she'll discover she isn't the only one looking for her brother—and what he stole.



Alison Ames lives in Boulder, Colorado with a lot of animals and her almost-wife. She loves birds, comics, and the rule of three. She is the author of *To Break a Covenant* (Page Street, 2021) and *It Looks Like Us* (Page Street, 2022).



Young Adult

Poemhood: Our Black Revival

*Edited by Amber McBride, Erica Martin
and Taylor Byas*

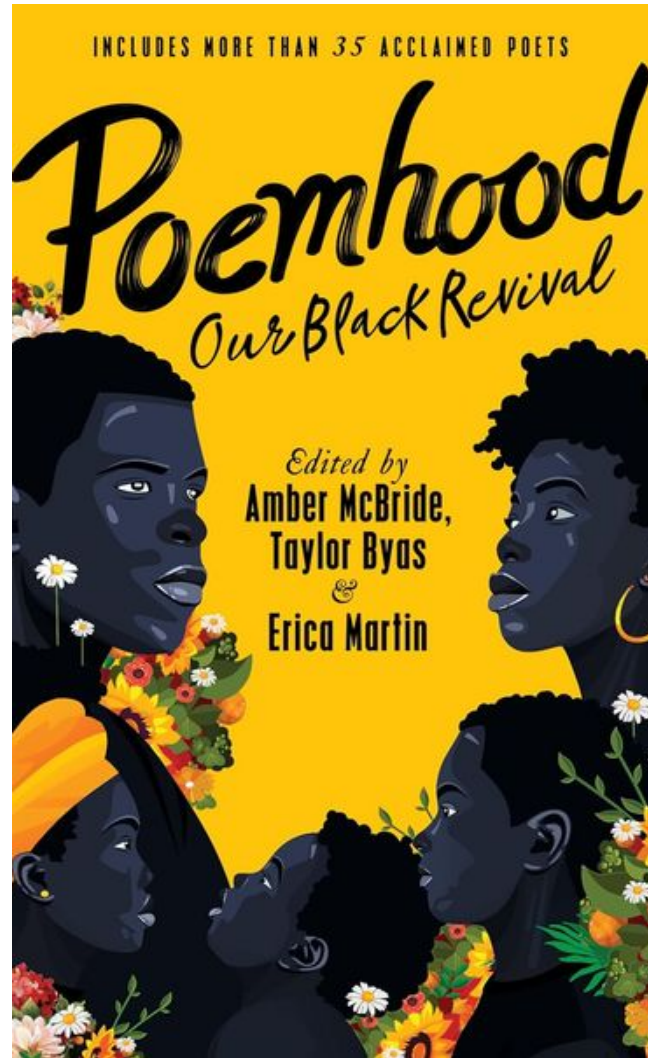
Starring thirty-seven poets, with contributions from acclaimed authors, including Kwame Alexander, Ibi Zoboi, and Nikki Giovanni, this breathtaking Black YA poetry anthology edited by National Book Award finalist Amber McBride, Taylor Byas, and Erica Martin celebrates Black poetry, folklore, and culture.

*Come, claim your wings.
Lift your life above the earth,
return to the land of your father's birth.
What exactly is it to be Black in America?*

Well, for some, it's learning how to morph the hatred placed by others into love for oneself; for others, it's unearthing the strength it takes to continue to hold one's swagger when multitudinous factors work to make Black lives crumble. For some, it's gathering around the kitchen table as Grandma tells the story of Anansi the spider, while for others it's grinning from ear to ear while eating auntie's spectacular 7Up cake.

Black experiences and traditions are complex, striking, and vast—they stretch longer than the Nile and are four times as deep—and carry more than just unimaginable pain—there is also joy.

Featuring an all-star group of thirty-seven powerful poetic voices, including such luminaries as Kwame Alexander, James Baldwin, Ibi Zoboi, Audre Lorde, Nikki Giovanni, and Gwendolyn Brooks, this riveting anthology depicts the diversity of the Black experience by fostering a conversation about race, faith, heritage, and resilience between fresh poets and the literary ancestors that came before them.



A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection pick!
Three starred reviews!

HarperCollins (World English), January 30, 2024

Middle Grade

Something Maybe Magnificent by R.L. Toalson

There's a new man in her mom's life, and Victoria is determined to get rid of him—no matter what. Both a standalone novel and a follow up to *The First Magnificent Summer*, this pitch-perfect middle grade story is destined to become a classic.

Thirteen-year-old aspiring writer Victoria Reeves remains dedicated to writing in her diary as her reading tastes evolve from Virginia Woolf to Sylvia Plath. She's growing up—getting the hang of her monthly “visitor,” coming to terms with her relationship with her estranged father, and grappling with her ever-evolving views of womanhood. But the summer brings unexpected bumps along the way when Victoria develops complicated feelings about the cute boy next door and decidedly uncomplicated ones about her mom's new boyfriend.

To protect her mom—and the family dynamic she's used to—from this unwanted interloper, Victoria will do what it takes to send him packing. But when she goes too far, Victoria realizes all she's done is ruin a good thing for her mom. Is it too late to set things right?



R.L. Toalson lives in San Antonio, Texas with her husband, six children, and two arrogant cats. She's the author of *The Colors of the Rain* (Yellow Jacket, 2018) which won the Arnold Adoff Poetry Honor Award for New Voices in 2020; *The Woods* (Yellow Jacket, 2019) which received a starred review from Booklist; and the highly acclaimed *The First Magnificent Summer* (Simon and Schuster, 2023).



Simon and Schuster / Aladdin (NA), May 28, 2024

Monster Tree by Sarah Allen

From the author of *The Nightmare House* ("A sophisticated choice for horror readers"—Booklist, starred review), Sarah Allen weaves the supernatural adventure of *Stranger Things* with a poignant tale of grief, the healing power of art, and the uniting force of friendship in *Monster Tree*.

Linus used to be an artist, like his dad. Then his father died and Linus's mom moved them to the other side of the city, hoping for a fresh start. Maybe, for the first time in months, Linus will even draw again.

But there's something unusual about their neighbor Maude and something wrong with the grotesque tree in her backyard. At night Linus sees it moving, changing, growing. When increasingly bizarre events plague the neighborhood—massive claw marks appearing on doors and cars, pets going missing, sightings of a red-eyed creature—he suspects Maude and her tree are to blame.

With his home under threat, Linus teams up with his goofy best friend, Spencer, and no-nonsense new girl Abby to unearth whatever sinister seeds have been planted next door . . . where something truly monstrous is just taking root.



Sarah Allen is the author of *What Stars Are Made Of* (FSG, 2020), *Breathing Underwater* (FSG, 2022), and *The Nightmare House* (FSG, 2023). Born and raised in Utah, she received an MFA in creative writing from Brigham Young University, and now lives in Orlando, Florida. She spends her non-writing time watching David Attenborough documentaries and blasting show-tunes.



Option Publishers:

China: Beijing Yutan (Simplified Chinese rights)
France: Milan
Italy: Garzanti
Russia: Eksmo
Spain: Roca
Turkey: Panama Publishing
UK: PRH

Macmillan/FSG (NA), September 3, 2024

Baghdad Girl by Sarah Sassoon

Baghdad Girl, a middle-grade verse novel by Iraqi-Israeli poet Sarah Sassoon, tells the story of Aziza Shamash, a young Jewish girl whose life is uprooted when the Jews of Iraq are expelled from their homes in Baghdad in 1951.

This is an electrifying and critically important book that centers the young voice of a vivacious, curious and hyper-intelligent girl who must reckon with the forces of history as she confronts the limits on her own freedom and that of her family. When the Shamash family emigrates to Israel, pain and hope collide as Aziza tries to make her way in a brave new world.

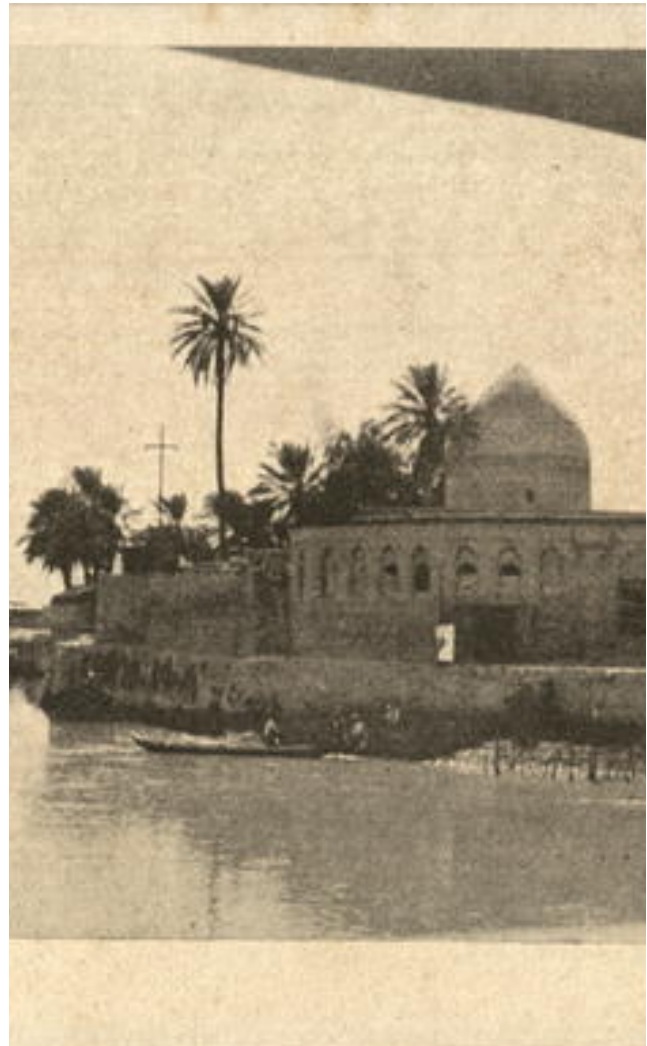
Baghdad Girl tells the story of the Jews from Arab lands with an intimacy that only a young voice like Aziza's could lay bare.

An honest, raw, important work in which Sassoon portrays Arab Jewish identity and sheds light on ethnic disparities in Israel but also what it meant to be a woman in this male-dominated world and society. Nuanced, bold and necessary.”

– Ayelet Tsabari, author of *The Art of Leaving*



Sarah Sassoon is an Australian, Iraqi Jewish writer who lives in Jerusalem with her husband and four sons. She is editorial advisor for *Distinctions: A Sephardi and Mizrahi Journal*, the author of *Shoham's Bangle* (Kar-Ben, 2022), which was a Sydney Taylor Notable and won the SCBWI Crystal Kite Award, and *This is Not a Cholent* (Kar-Ben, 2024). Her poetry chapbook, *This is Why We Don't Look Back*, won first place in the Harbor Review's Jewish Women's poetry contest.



When Grandpa Jonah Was Just a Kid by Yannets Levi

When Grandpa Jonah Was Just a Kid is a universal and timeless story about the gap between rich and poor. Depicting the life of one Yemenite family, the series is written with compassion, wit and ingenuity.

Jonah has nothing: no TV, no toys or games, no bed, not even a blanket. But if you think he's miserable, think again! A kid as smart and kind as Jonah will always be able to seek out adventure and make the world around him a little bit better. Through resourcefulness, creativity, and, ultimately, generosity of spirit, Jonah finds his way out of any pickle, be it his mother's overbearing employer, his father's untreated illness, their family's eviction or their perpetual lack of money and food.

When Grandpa Jonah Was Just a Kid is based on a true story – the childhood experiences of the author's father, Elijah Levi. Growing up in Israel in the 1920s and 1930s, Elijah, of Yemenite decent, endured dire poverty at home and savage bullying at school because of his Mizrahi origins. Elijah later became a journalist and was also a member of the Lehi underground. That part of his life inspired the TV series *Carthago*, written by Yannets and his brother Reshef Levi and recently awarded two prizes at Canneseries.



Yannets Levi is a writer of books, plays, a TV host and a performer. He is one of Israel's most popular writers for children and adults with 13 bestsellers in a row. He was awarded the 2010 Public Library Award, the 2016 Dvora Omer Award for Children's Literature and the 2021 Prime Minister's Prize.



Full English translation of volume 1 is available!

Kinneret Zmora Bitan Dvir, 2017-2023, 4 volumes

Picture Books

Kisses from Space
by Anna Menon and Keri Vasek
Illustrated by: Andy Harkness

As Polaris Dawn crewmember, engineer, and mother Anna Menon gets ready to take off into space, she penned this picture book as a love letter to her kids—reimagining their family as a tight-knit clan of adventurous dragons who love each other across any distance.

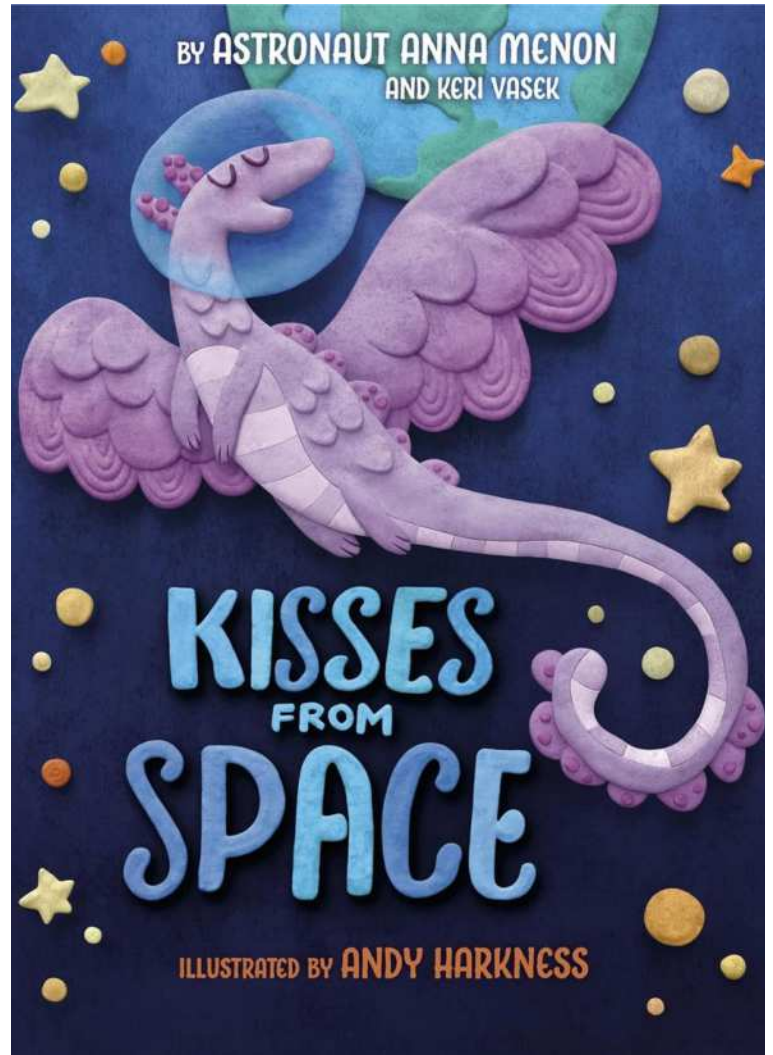
When Anna Menon was offered the chance to become an astronaut on Polaris Dawn, it would fulfill her childhood dream of going to space. But it would also put the largest distance ever between her and her kids. Anna had to consider how she'd connect with her kids as she orbited 870 miles above them at over 15,000 miles per hour.

Kisses from Space is the story of a mama dragon coming home from an out-of-this-world adventure and, snuggling her baby dragons close, she tells them of her journey and how she thought of them the entire time. This heartwarming picture book—written in fun, lyrical rhyme and stunningly illustrated—is about the bonds between family members and a mother's unwavering love for her children.

Anna Menon is an American engineer and crew member of Polaris Dawn, the first human spaceflight mission of the Polaris Program. Born in Houston, she holds a bachelor's degree in math and Spanish from Texas Christian University and a master's in biomedical engineering from Duke University. Anna worked at NASA as a flight controller before joining SpaceX in 2018. She lives with her husband and two children in Houston.

Keri Vasek is a creator and community manager based in Houston. She holds a degree in behavioral sciences from Concordia University Texas and loves writing, exploring, and being creative with her four kids, whom she homeschools.

Andy Harkness' most recent solo works, *Wolfboy* and its sequel, *Wolfboy Is Scared*, were published by Bloomsbury (2021/2023). An accomplished animation production designer, he spent twenty-five years at Walt Disney Feature Animation Studios, on films from *The Lion King* to *Moana*. He currently works at Skydance Animation Studios as a production designer.



Rights Sold:

Korea: Hyejiwon

Germany: Bastei Lübbe

Random House (NA), June 4, 2024

It's Okay to be Prickly

by *Nastya Ryabtseva*

Illustrated by: *Nataša Jovanić*

It is hard to make friends when you are covered in prickly needles. Theodor the Hedgehog is so lonely, he is prepared to do anything – even turn himself inside out, literally – to make other animals like him.

But when he meets Sofia the Tortoise, Theodor discovers that a real friend will appreciate you for who you are – and that only when you celebrate your true self will you be able to realize your full potential.

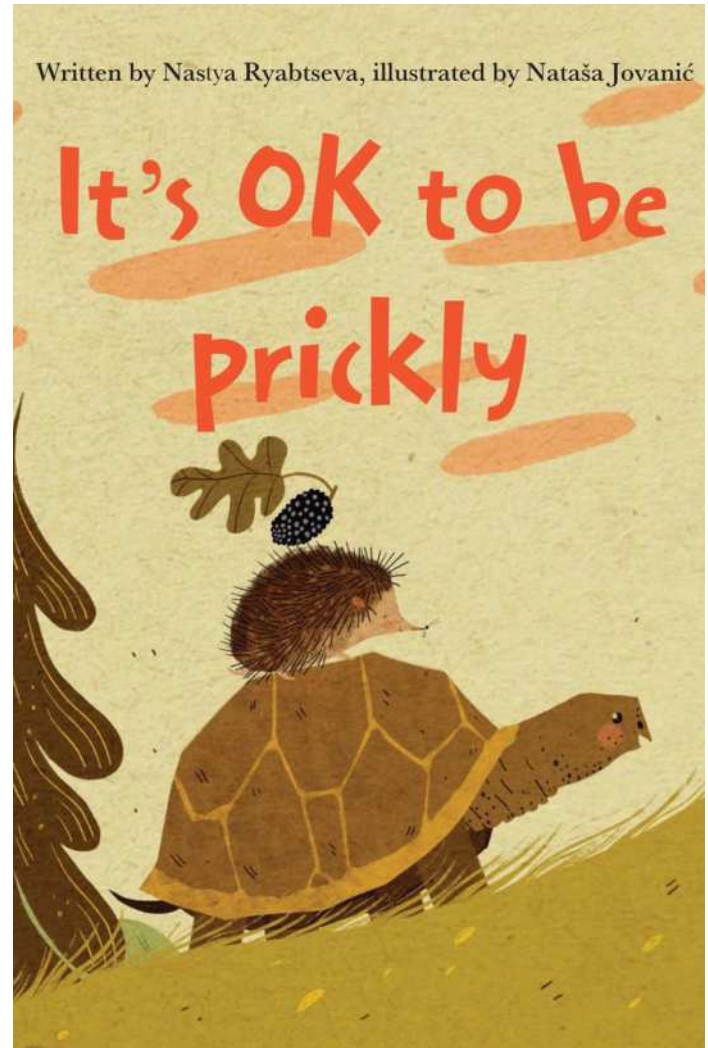
The Jerusalem-based educator and journalist Nastya Ryabtseva has never met Nataša Jovanić, an artist from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Yet, after having been introduced online by mutual acquaintances, Nastya and Nataša created this sweet and wise picture book about the freedom and joy that come with self-acceptance.



Nastya Ryabtseva is a journalist and educator who has worked for various NGOs and covered social issues such as homelessness, adoption, disability etc. In March 2022, Ryabtseva founded Wild Walks, an initiative offering healing community experiences to Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking teens who moved to Israel because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



Nataša Jovanić is an artist and illustrator from Bosnia. A graduate of the Academy of Arts, Banja Luka and the University of the Arts, Berlin, Jovanić has worked on magazine illustration (Bloom, UK; Honest History, USA), winning the Ilustrofest's First Prize. Jovanić has also illustrated books for children, including Patrick Kellegher's *A Witch and a Wizard Live Here* (2021).



Rights Sold:

Brazil: Mundo Benvirá
China: Shanghai Juvenile
Korea: DajeongDagam
Turkey: Koç University

Twinkle Twinkle Chanukah by Talia Benamy

Twinkle Twinkle Chanukah tells the tale not only of the Chanukah lights themselves - the shamash that lights the candles and the place of the Menorah by the window, but also what happens inside - the dreidel games, the latkes sizzling in the pan, the jelly donuts on the table, all illuminated by candlelight. In rhyme that lends itself to being sung, Twinkle Twinkle Chanukah also tells the story of the mighty Maccabees, the miracle of the oil and the joy of families, celebrating together, all wrapped up (like a present!) by the refrain: *Twinkle twinkle menorah/On this happy Chanukah*. Back-matter will detail the various traditions and stories featured in the book.



Talia Benamy loves writing stories that center Jewish identity and bring light into the world. She is an editor at Philomel, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers, where she works on books for kids and teens. In her non-book-focused time, she loves travel, politics, and being an aunt to a whole host of nibblings. Talia lives in Brooklyn, where she was born and raised.



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